

Barefeet Farm School

Family Handbook

2026-2027



barefeetfarmschool.com
(360) 441-2275

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About BFS

Barefeet Farm School is a place for everyone. Barefeet Farm LLC is an equal opportunity organization and will not allow discrimination based upon race, creed, color, national origin, sex, honorably discharged veteran or military status, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, or ability. Barefeet Farm School functions in accordance with the ADA.

BFS is a licensed, outdoor nature based preschool operating under [Washington Administrative Code 110-302](#).

BFS resides on land that is the traditional territory of the Lummi and Nooksack Indigenous Peoples. Their presence is imbued in the mountains, valleys, waterways, and shorelines around us. We work to nurture our relationship with our Coast Salish neighbors and share responsibilities to care for their homelands where we all reside today.

Totem Trail is a private road shared by four houses. Please be conscious of the neighbors! Drive slowly on the road to avoid throwing dust. Park in the designated area.

Safety

Smoking, use of illegal drugs, consumption of alcohol, and vaping are prohibited at Barefeet Farm School.

Parents may review BFS's health policy, staff policies, consistent care policy, and other relevant program policies by request.

BFS staff will be trained annually in BFS-specific safety procedures, outlined here in the handbook as well as in Washington State's Outdoor Preschool Licensing Guidelines.

Our classroom phone number is (360) 201-3658.

Sexual Abuse Prevention

BFS staff are mandatory reporters and will follow guidance per RCW 26.44.020 and 26.44.030. This means staff are required to report any suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, or maltreatment to DSHS. [Mandated Reporter guidelines, processes, and procedures can be found here. \(DCYF\)](#) BFS staff must pass a background check upon hire (renewed every 7 years as required by licensing requirements) and be interviewed by the program director to determine suitability. Staff are trained in sexual abuse prevention upon hire as required by RCW 26.44.020.

Family Engagement and Partnership

Families and BFS staff will have an opportunity to connect every program day during drop off and pick up. If either party would like to schedule more dedicated time together, they may request to do so at any time.

Families and BFS staff will have an opportunity to meet for conferences at least two times each school year. Conferences serve as a time to connect, get to know each other, and talk about your child. Some of the things we'll talk about are...

- Your child's development, growth, and health and how we can support their specific needs at BFS
- Family routines or events, approaches to parenting, family beliefs, culture, and language
- How we can collaborate to provide consistency between home and BFS, especially if there are specific areas of growth we'd like to support in your child
- Outside services that may benefit your child, if applicable
- What it's like for your child to be building a community at school (after they've been in regular attendance for at least a few months)
- What your child engages with at BFS (what they play with and how they play)
- Anything else you'd like to share. The space is for you! We will be sure to keep our conversations at conferences confidential.

Before then, families can contact BFS at barefeetfarmschool@gmail.com. You are also always welcome to join us during class time.

We love having parents and community members around! You are always welcome to visit your child at school. Some guidelines...

- We know that you are your child's primary educator and leader. When parents are around, we acknowledge that you have primary authority over your children. BFS staff have authority over the school. We will all work to be conscious of each other's power and presence to support the needs of everyone.
- Most children behave differently around their parents than they do without them there. Sometimes for the more regulated, sometimes for the less.
- Routines are very important to the flow of our day. Please be conscious of this and support them with your adult presence.
- We will be happy to assign you tasks if you ask for them! Otherwise we will assume you are there to just enjoy.
- Open communication between parents and staff is essential.

Curriculum Philosophy

Barefeet Farm School is inspired by many different curricula, people, and ways of being. We

primarily look to the Montessori, Waldorf, Forest School, and Reggio Emilia models for inspiration. Barefeet Farm School is play based and child led.

Our curriculum is to play. In our world of hyper-academia and standardized tests, it is sometimes hard to just let them play. *"They should be learning their letters and how to hold a pencil correctly! They should be getting ready for Kindergarten"* some might say. And they are. Through their play with letter puzzles and cloud gazing, they are learning letters. Through building with blocks and making grand art projects they are honing their fine motor skills. Most importantly though, they are practicing curiosity, confidence, persistence, communication, happiness... all the things that will make their future endeavors possible. Our days at BFS are packed full of learning. It doesn't happen on worksheets usually, unless the children are drawn to them. Early childhood education is a foundation for everything else.

To support this emergent curriculum, our classroom at BFS is equipped and staged with a large variety of developmentally appropriate loose parts, tools, and toys. BFS staff actively observe children in order to support the learning toward which they are gravitating. Staff will organize the classroom in ways that encourage the children to try new things, explore their current interests, and grow every day. Being outdoors is vital to this mission of child led learning because the lack of walls allows them to take down their walls, too. They can run, jump, yell, tumble, and throw throughout their experience: learning with their whole bodies. The outdoors is both sensory rich and sensorily peaceful. Children can find sensory rich environments in textures, visuals, and sounds of nature, or they can have the opportunity to relax their sensory systems in the vast quiet of the outside.

Preschool is often the first chance children have to be part of a community without their parents present. This is a big deal! While they explore their interests, children will also have the opportunity throughout their time at BFS to cultivate social and emotional skills. It is important for kids to be able to communicate effectively and respectfully with peers and adults. Staff will encourage kids to speak to each other through language modeling and direct encouragement. *("I'm not sure what she's playing. Why don't you ask her?")* Kids at BFS will have the space to feel and address all of their feelings: joy, disappointment, excitement, anger, frustration, happiness, sadness, and more. Through their time at BFS, children will learn what it feels like to be part of a cooperative community. By steeping them in curiosity, joy, community, and confidence, they won't accept anything less going forward.

If they love to learn, know how to communicate with their peers, and are confident in themselves, they will be ready for anything- especially next school year.

BFS supports children with special needs to the best of our ability and with the staffing available. Children who need specific care will have their experience guided by an individual care plan. We are committed to following IEPs, IHPs, and IFSPs if they exist. Families of children who require a 1:1 support person due to health or behavioral needs will need to find and employ their caregiver. BFS is happy to assist in the search for a 1:1 support person.

Guidance and Discipline Policy and Procedure

Barefeet Farm School is for all kids, and some kids need more support to thrive in our child led learning environment than others. We can't say it enough: *It is ok to need support! We are here to grow!* We rely on a close connection with our enrolled families because we only get to see your kids for a limited amount of time in the day. You know them best; you have the biggest influence on their lives. We'll be on each other's team to give enrolled children the most consistent support possible. All children are on different developmental paths; perfect and growing at the same time.

Policy: To support children's social and emotional well-being and mental health, BFS staff embed responsive and effective teacher-child interactions and provide positive behavior support strategies that encourage prosocial behavior and enhance children's self-esteem. BFS staff work closely with families to support the individual needs of every child.

Procedure: BFS staff utilize established, developmentally appropriate positive guidance techniques to strengthen children's social competence. Positive behavior supports include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Maintaining nurturing and responsive relationships with children and families that foster trust and emotional security
- Involving children in establishing consistent, reasonable behavior expectations
 - Coaching/modeling appropriate behavior
 - Noticing appropriate behavior
 - Offering choices
 - Redirecting to another activity
 - Teacher supported self-regulation time
- Using active supervision of children's activities
 - Adapting the environment, routines and activities to the needs of the children
 - Positioning adults so they can see and hear all children in their care
 - Forming relationships with children to be able to anticipate their behavior
 - Staying close to children who may need additional support
 - Engaging and redirecting
 - Providing supportive feedback for behavior and motivating continued effort
- Encouraging a balance of active and quiet experiences as well as extended periods of self-directed play
- Encouraging self care and teamwork amongst staff to maintain adult regulation
- Giving advance notice before changing activities or spaces
- Modeling and teaching self-regulation techniques, feelings recognition and expression, conflict resolution and other pro-social skills

Violent or Unsafe Behavior, Bullying: As a last resort, in extraordinary circumstances, when the above interventions are not successful in reducing unsafe behaviors and the safety of a child and others is in jeopardy, physical safety interventions may need to be implemented.

Limited restraint is used to prevent serious injury to persons or property. Physical intervention is not to be used any longer than it takes to achieve the safety goal. Restraint is never used as a punishment. Only trained staff will be authorized to respond to situations using physical intervention.

If necessary, BFS staff may use limited restraint techniques including restrained escorts and safety holds. In the event that physical intervention is used, staff will inform parent/guardian by time of pick-up.

If a child's aggressive or unsafe behavior becomes frequent and habitual, if the child is bullying other children, or if the child appears to not have remorse or a desire to grow, an individualized positive behavior support plan for the child must be developed in collaboration with the child's caregiver. A written positive behavior support plan may include

- Observation/consultation from specialized professionals
- Use of a 1:1 support person
- Referral to other community support services

The positive behavior support plan will be reviewed regularly with the team including the child's parents/guardians.

Suspension: As a last resort in extraordinary circumstances, when the above interventions are not successful in reducing the unsafe behaviors and/or keeping children safe, the child may be temporarily suspended from participation in BFS programming. If needed, an alternative schedule, planned jointly by staff and caregivers may be provided until behavior improves, with the following provisions:

- The child is not to be punished at home, but be told that they may return to BFS with the understanding that unsafe behavior will not be tolerated
- The child is welcomed and encouraged to be successful when they return to BFS
- BFS staff will monitor the plan and interventions
- All involved parties stay in communication with each other about the child's progress.

Adults are never allowed to:

- Use corporal punishment, including but not limited to spanking, shaking, or grabbing in an aggressive manner or other behavior that inflicts pain
- Use verbal or emotional abuse, such as, but not limited to making threats, bullying, yelling, belittling or shaming
- Use physical restraint methods that could cause harm to the child including restriction of airway, or any locked seclusion rooms.
- Use food or liquids as a punishment or reward
- Interfere with a child's ability to take care of toileting and hygiene needs

Training:

BFS staff will be trained on this policy annually.

Termination of Services and Expulsion Policy

Barefeet Farm School may terminate a child's services due to that child's parent or guardian's inability to meet the expectations and requirements of the program. Expectations and requirements of the program may include unpaid bills or a parent, guardian or family member's inappropriate or unsafe behavior in or near program space.

If Barefeet Farm School is unable to support a child's growth and safety or the growth and safety of others due to severe behavioral challenges, including but not limited to recurring hitting, kicking, or biting, elopement from the program area, or inappropriate language use, the child may be expelled from Barefeet Farm School.

BFS staff will avoid expulsion by following these steps:

- Staff will notify the family of the child when a concern arises so that the family and BFS staff can collaborate to support the needs of the child so that they can participate harmoniously in programming. This will likely include a meeting outside of class hours with the family.
- A support plan will be created. The support plan may include a modified attendance plan (fewer hours per day/days per week), dedicated staffing supervision for the child if available, increased support for the child's needs (more snacks/water, more clothing layers for warmth, more time to transition to a new space, etc.), a plan to pursue outside services such as occupational or mental health therapy, or other individualized supports.
- Steps taken at BFS to follow the support plan will be documented and communicated to the family in writing via email. More in person meetings may be requested to discuss progress.
- If BFS staff has fulfilled the individual support plan to the best of their ability and the behavior persists, the child may be asked to disenroll from BFS. BFS staff will recommend other services and resources that may suit the child's needs more fully.

Holidays and Birthdays

We love celebrating! At this time, BFS doesn't host any official holiday gatherings, but we will likely acknowledge holidays in class as they come up. These include but are not limited to Equinoxes and Solstices, Christmas, Hanukkah, Ramadan, Eid, Juneteenth, Memorial Day, Halloween, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Independence Day, and all other federally recognized holidays in the USA. BFS is happy to acknowledge additional holidays that families celebrate.

We celebrate all birthdays unless families request not to. Families are welcome to bring treats or other celebratory items for birthdays. Celebratory food must be store purchased fruits and vegetables (uncut), foods prepackaged in the original manufacturer containers, or snacks

prepared, cooked, or baked at home by parents or guardians of a child in care. An ingredient list must accompany food prepared, cooked, or baked at home.

BFS will not distribute party invitations unless they are intended for every child in the class.

Holiday and Break Schedule

Date	Event
Tuesday September 8, 2026	School Year Begins!
Thursday November 26	No School-Thanksgiving
December 21-January 5, 2027	No School- Winter Break
Monday January 18	No School- MLK Jr. Day
Thursday February 18	No School- President's Day (observed)
Monday March 15	No School- Daylight Savings Recovery Day (Staff in service day)
April 5-8	No School- Spring Break
Monday May 31	No School- Memorial Day
June 10, 2027	Last Day of the School Year

Enrollment and Disenrollment Requirements

Children must be 2.5 years old and able to use the bathroom semi-independently before they may enroll in BFS. This means they will wear cloth underwear and use the bathroom with minimal assistance. BFS staff are able and willing to give periodic reminders to use the bathroom. By enrolling, you are committing to submitting tuition payments to BFS for the entirety of the school year unless we agree otherwise.

BFS staff must be made aware in writing of children who are bound or protected by any court orders including parenting plans and protection orders. A child's family is responsible for training BFS staff on any required actions from a court order if applicable.

If at any point you feel that your child is struggling or we are not serving their needs appropriately we want to know! Needs range from academic interests to bathroom check ins to relationship coaching between kids. Our environment is flexible and designed to serve children as individuals. We are glad to talk about accommodations and changes in order to effectively serve the children and families in our care. We know that we are collaborators with you, the families, and we do not take offense to requests for collaboration.

BFS requires one month of notice to disenroll a child. This means that families are responsible for tuition payments one month after they alert BFS of disenrollment, and tuition is paid by the month. Example: On February 10th, a family tells BFS their child's last day will be February 25th. The family is responsible for all of February's and March's tuition.

Our school year at BFS is intentionally designed to last from September through June. When families tour kindergartens in the early spring, their future schools will occasionally offer early enrollment for the sake of the child's comfort in their future school environment. We highly discourage leaving preschool mid year in order to secure a spot in kindergarten early. This mid year transition discounts the community and personal growth that the child has worked so hard to build through the winter! Spring at BFS is carefully crafted to celebrate all the work we've done together, to let it settle in before moving on to something new.

Children who know they are moving on to a new school may ask to go to the new school right away rather than waiting until the fall. As adults, we have the gift of perspective and can see from an outsider's point of view that while kindergarten is exciting, it is important to allow the children to come to the end of one experience before beginning another. Their desire to try something new, or their resistance to coming to preschool, is often them testing their community: "do I belong here?" "what will it be like when I'm not here?" It will serve them well to work through these questions in their established routines and environment! BFS staff are happy to talk about strategies to support this transition.

Illness/Exclusion Policy

Children should not come to preschool if...

- they've had a fever above 100 degrees (oral temp) in the last 24 hours
- they're experiencing new or unexplained coughing, sneezing, or excessive runny nose
- they've vomited in the last 24 hours
- they're actively sick: their spirit and energy levels are different than usual, accompanied by any symptoms of illness
- they have a communicable disease i.e. chicken pox, the flu, etc.

We are a community! It's important that we care for each other by keeping sick kids home. By being together we will inevitably share germs. However, mitigating the sharing of sickness as much as possible is how we'll keep our community thriving.

Fees and Payment

BFS tuition is \$1060 per month for four day per week enrollment or \$540 for two day per week enrollment. There are no other fees. Tuition is due at the beginning of each month for that month. Tuition may be paid with a check written to Barefeet Farm School or cash. If families pay tuition via Venmo @barefeetfarmschool, they will add a 2% fee. (Example: your tuition is \$540 but you would pay \$551 if using Venmo.) Payments later than the 10th of each month may incur a 5% late fee.

Tuition is charged by the month, including December and April. This ensures that our staff can count on a consistent wage year round. June 2027's tuition will be \$450 4 days/ \$230 2 days.

A non-refundable \$150 deposit will be due upon enrollment. This deposit will go towards September's tuition.

Please notify BFS in advance by email or text to the school phone if an absence should occur. Single missed days will not be refunded.

In the event that we need to cancel school due to weather related conditions, which happens at least once per year, tuition will not be reimbursed for missed days. See "emergency preparedness" on page 14 for information on cancellations.

Sign In and Sign Out

Being punctual helps our day flow easily. Some children find drop offs harder than others. Different families prefer different separation techniques. When drop offs are tricky, routines often make a huge difference. We are happy to support your parting rituals. Some ideas that have worked for other people are...

- The kissing hand, based on the book *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn. You each keep a kiss in your hand all day for when you miss each other.
- I Love You Rituals from Conscious Discipline (Our favorite: "bread and butter, blackberry jam, say I love you as [silly, fast, sweet, etc] as you can.") There are lots of them!
- Signing in with each other and a simple hug goodbye.
- Planning ahead for drop off. Before leaving home or in the car ride, narrate what drop off will look like together. "First we will unbuckle seat belts and get out of the car. Then what?" Make sure this narration leads up to the goodbye moment. "I will sign you in, give you a kiss on the forehead, and walk back to the car to go to work while you tell [adult/other kid] what we had for breakfast." The key to this is consistency- follow the

plan!

As the adults in our kids' lives, we are the leaders that they look to for guidance. Be aware of your emotional and energetic state at drop off. Be consistent and reliable. This means that when you say "I'm going to leave now," do it! If drop off is hard, the tears almost always disappear within the first ten minutes after parents leave. While it's hard to leave a crying child, the best thing you can do is make a predictable commitment and walk away. Staff will contact you if the sadness doesn't resolve in a reasonable amount of time.

Kids will only be released to people on their drop off list. Parents/guardians can amend this at any time via in person conversation, phone, or email. Children will need to be signed in and signed out every day they are present at BFS.

While we encourage kids to participate in the full school day, parents are welcome to pick up their children whenever they need to. Because we may be in the forest or near the pond, send a text before you arrive so we can agree on a meetup location.

Child Records

Each child will have a record filed at BFS. This record includes their enrollment form including signed acknowledgement of the risk/benefit analysis information, any individualized health or behavior plans, vaccination information, medication authorization if applicable, conference notes, and other program forms.

If any of this information changes, it is the family's responsibility to notify BFS staff to make appropriate changes to the record.

All information in a child's file is confidential. DCYF department licensors, health specialists, and health consultants may have access to children's records. Parents and guardians may access their own child's record.

Kindergarten Readiness

Barefeet Farm School is a preschool that supports kids in a wide range of developmental areas so that they will be content in the present and ready for the future.

Pre-school: before school. Something that you do before school that is different from school. For the most part, we've decided that school is a place we send our kids, where they learn a set of skills and knowledge from adults who know things, where they have desks and hallways, where they use pencils and carry backpacks.

So then what do we do to get ready for that? What do you need before school so that school works for you? Preschool. We tumble and play and communicate and experiment. We focus on skills like persistence and confidence. We find joy in community. More and more in our country, preschool is school that starts earlier. There are desks and pencils, calendar circle times and a set curriculum. But what if that's not the first step? What if to get ready for school, we need to establish some skills, community, and joy first? If kids don't develop core muscle strength through gross motor play like running, rolling, and climbing, they aren't able to sit in chairs. They fall out of them. Preschool, outdoor play, child-led learning, is what they need to be ready for what's next.

For most kids, kindergarten is their "what's next." Here are some resources from local school districts about kindergarten readiness. BFS staff are happy to discuss kindergarten readiness and assist families in registering for kindergarten.

[Bellingham School District Kindergarten Page](#)

[Mount Baker School District Kindergarten Readiness Guide](#)

Developmental Screenings

Developmental screenings can assure families that their child is developmentally on track. Pediatricians will offer these screenings at well child exams. The results of these screenings can often make services available for families who need them. [The CDC provides more information here.](#)

Family-Supplied Items

Kids should bring a backpack or bag to school every day with lunch, at least one full seasonally appropriate change of clothes, and a water bottle. Kids can bring sunscreen, favorite books or toys, or other items from home if families so choose. Toys brought to school may not be electric or battery powered. Be aware that items that come to school may get dirty or damaged. Kids will be expected to carry their own belongings, so please make sure their bags are suitable for this.

Barefeet Farm School is a fully outdoor school. We really truly will be outside the whole time. We are part of nature! Proper gear is vital, especially in the winter.

Kids should wear clothes that are appropriate for the weather. In Bellingham, especially in the winter, this means layers! We really will be outside for six hours. We will probably get dirty or covered in paint.

- Late Fall/Winter/Early Spring recommended clothing: cozy base and midlayers (wool or polyester leggings and shirt, sweat pants, T-shirt, sweatshirt/sweater), warm socks, insulated and waterproof boots, rain pants or bibs, rain coat, hat, waterproof gloves.
- Spring/Fall recommended clothing: pants (jeans, sweats, leggings, etc.), short or long sleeve shirt, sweatshirt or sweater, rain coat, warm socks, hat, waterproof shoes or boots. Rain gear in backpack.
- Summer recommended clothing: something they can run in and will keep them cool. Shorts, shirts, dresses... and sweatshirt/sweater in backpack. Crocs or sandals with stay-on straps work well.

Each kid needs at least one seasonally appropriate change of clothes in their backpack every day.

A more specific gear list including recommended brands is available by request.

Food

Families will provide a daily lunch for their own children. We will all sit together to share a meal daily. We will have opportunities for snacking throughout the day. Some families like to pack designated “snack” and “lunch” for their kids. Some pack all food in one lunch box. Either is fine by us. Foods that require refrigeration will need to be packed in an insulated container with ice packs as necessary. Children’s lunches will be stored in their backpacks. BFS does not have access to a refrigerator. We recommend warm food and/or tea in a thermos during colder months.

As a licensed preschool, we are required to associate with the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program [\(CACFP\) food requirements](#):

According to the guidelines, meals should include...

- One serving (6 ounces) of either unflavored low-fat (1 percent) or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk
- One half cup of fruits, vegetables, or both
- One half ounce of grains

BFS has extra snacks on hand if kids need them. We will offer children one “school snack” per day, generally a granola bar or meat stick, if they finish their lunch early in the day and are hungry later in the day. If children habitually finish their lunch early in the day, we will let families know that they need more food!

BFS staff will comply with the [DOH Food Worker Manual](#) when handling food if necessary.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

If a staff member has an emergency and must leave, the other staff members present would supervise the children. If the third staff member is not on the premises, they would be called to come to the school immediately to support and supervise. If the third staff member isn't available, approved volunteers or substitute teachers would be called to support and supervise.

If parents are not able to get to their children for up to three days, the primary residence ("the house") on the property would be used as an emergency shelter. Emergency food and water (a three day supply stored in the lower level of the house) would be eaten/drunk. Staff would stay with the children until families are able to access the school.

In the event of...

A fire in the classroom: we would evacuate as far from the classroom as necessary, gathering near the welcome center if it's safe.

A fire in the woods or at the pond: we would evacuate as far from the woods or pond as necessary.

An aggressive animal encounter: we would gather as close together as possible, with adults surrounding children. We would make loud noises and hold our arms up if applicable. When safe, we would evacuate away from the animal, into the house if necessary.

An earthquake: We would move to a space as clear from falling hazards as possible, crouch and cover our necks, and then contact appropriate authorities to ensure the space is safe to return to after the earthquake has subsided.

An intruder: We would quietly gather together in the boat, with the adults at the open end. An adult would call 911. If appropriate and accessible, we would go into the house. In the woods or near the pond, we would gather as close together as possible in an inconspicuous location, with adults surrounding children.

Lightning: We would seek shelter in the house if a lightning storm was passing directly over the school.

Strong winds below 25 mph: Staff may advise families of the strong winds by text or email and children would not enter the forest during the wind event.

Strong winds 25 mph or above: programming would be canceled.

Heat over 100 degrees: BFS programming would be canceled.

Cold under 20 degrees: BFS programming would be canceled.

Air Quality Index above 150: BFS programming would be canceled.

Flooding: If staff can't access BFS or roads are unsafe near BFS, programming would be canceled.

Snow: Cancellations will be inspired by Bellingham and Mount Baker School District's cancellations. If staff can't access BFS, programming would be canceled.

A teacher would carry a child who can't walk, or push their wheelchair/mobility device in the case of an evacuation.

The teacher's backpack always accompanies the group of kids, including in an evacuation situation. It contains a (daily updated) list of present children, first aid kit, emergency information for all kids, medication information and medication as necessary, a small amount of potable water, and emergency plan information.

In the event of any emergency that requires the group to gather, the teacher who discovered the emergency would blow a whistle that is kept in the teacher's backpack. Kids would immediately go to the person who blew the whistle. The adult who didn't blow the whistle is responsible for calling 911 if necessary, while the adult who did blow the whistle is responsible for gathering and counting children until the 911 call is completed. When it's safe, an adult would call the third staff member or director of the school if they're not present to come assist.

With all three staff members present, the 1:6 adult to child ratio would be kept even if one adult needs to respond to the emergency in any way. All staff present with children will count the children periodically and whenever the group moves to a new location. The adult with the teacher backpack will refer to the list of kids present to verify that all children are accounted for in an emergency situation.

Families may contact BFS by phone call or text during the school day at (360) 201-3658. If an early pick-up is necessary after an emergency situation, parents/guardians would be called when the group is safely away from the emergency. If primary guardians don't respond, the child's emergency contacts would be called. Guardians would be provided with an alternate pickup location on the property if the welcome center is compromised by the emergency.

If school is canceled for the day, staff (the director unless otherwise delegated in advance) will email families, asking them to reply with confirmation of receipt. If there's no response within an hour, staff will text and then call the family. Day-of cancellations will most often be notified by text message.

If children need to leave school midday due to an extreme weather scenario or other emergency, parents/guardians will be contacted by phone. If they don't answer or reply within ten minutes, emergency contacts will be called. If no one is available to pick up a child midday, staff will care for the child in a location safe from the emergency: in the house if necessary, until the child is able to be picked up. If the emergency renders the house unsafe, staff will relocate to an alternate evacuation location that is safe. The alternate location would be determined by

the director dependent on the specifics of the emergency, following local guidance from appropriate officials. In the event of an emergency evacuation staff would transport children in their cars to a safe location, following local emergency guidance. Guardians would be contacted by phone call or text as much as possible during the emergency event and updated with location changes as they occur. Staff and guardians would agree on an alternate pickup location by phone call or text as soon as possible.

Emergency drills will be executed on a regular schedule.

Risk/Benefit Analysis

A hazard is something that a person can't see or control. Risk is something a person can see and control. There is inherent risk to being outside, especially being in the forest and around the pond. We support children's inclination to explore the world, which is often reliant on risk taking. Kids who learn to take risks at a young age grow up to be persistent, curious, and confident fully grown people. For more information on risky play, BFS recommends the work of Teacher Tom Hobson, David Sobel, and Tim Gill. We talk about risk acknowledgement throughout our days together. One of our most commonly used phrases is, "what's your plan with that stick?" Staff are present and available to negotiate risks with children, to keep them from danger. Here's more information on potential risks of participating in an outdoor preschool:

Location/Activity	Hazards and Risks (things that could go wrong) Include seasonal changes in the environment, staff preparation, and developmental needs of children as appropriate.	Benefits (why we do it anyway)	Relevant ONB Program Standards (rules that tell us why this is important or how to respond)	Mitigation Procedure (How we make this activity as safe and beneficial as possible)
Woods, classroom: climbing off the ground	Climbing surface may be slippery if wet or frosty. Child may fall causing injury including head trauma. Child may climb out of staff's reach. Staff may not be immediately available for assistance. Child may misjudge their ability. Branches may be	Gross motor development, confidence development, exploration, proprioceptive input, boundary testing, vestibular input, balance, decision making, risk analysis, strength building, flexibility, hand/foot/eye	0145 Outdoor Nature-Based Program Space and Active Play 0345 Supervising Children 0110 Program Based Staff Policies and Training 0146 Equipment and	Staff actively supervises all children, scanning the space. Children know to not climb without permission. Staff inspects climbing surface for hazards, considers weather and other variables. Staff actively supervise climbing and stay in

	thinner than expected.	coordination	Surfaces in Outdoor Program Space	close range. One child climbs at a time. Staff narrates to the child regarding risks.
Forest, field, classroom: campfire activities	Potential burns. Potential damaged property/clothing. Potential smoke inhalation.	Skill building, fine motor development, responsibility building, decision making, risk analysis, communication	0345 Supervising Children 0351 ONB Program Campfire Activity Supervision and Safety 0110 Program Based Staff Policies and Training	Staff are trained in campfire safety. Campfire checklist is followed every time a fire is built. One fire is built at a time. Children are actively supervised and only one child is allowed near the fire at a time. Staff initiate conversations about fire safety throughout.
Anywhere: using developmentally appropriate sharp tools (scissors, sticks, pencils, etc.)	Potential puncture wounds.	Skill building, fine motor development, responsibility building, decision making, risk analysis, communication, negotiating tools, imagination	0345 Supervising Children 0146 Equipment and Surfaces in Outdoor Program Space 0165 Safety Requirements	Staff inspect the space for hazards deemed inappropriate for children. Children are taught about appropriate use of sharp tools. Children are taught to inspect sticks for sharp edges. Children are actively supervised when using sharp tools.
Pond	Potential drowning, potential illness if water is ingested	Nature observation, sensory development, exploration, imagination	0165 Safety Requirements 0175 Water Hazards and Swimming Pools 0345 Supervising Children 0350 Supervising Children During Water Activities 0356 ONB Program Capacity, Ratio, and Group Size	Children are never allowed to enter the water unless a lifeguard is present. Staff actively supervise children around the pond and stay within arm's reach of children who are more likely to enter the water. A life preserver is available near the pond. Children may lay on their stomachs to put their hands in the pond. The lower gate in the field remains closed unless the group goes to the pond or forest.
Path to forest: hillside	Potential falling down ravine hillside: injuries including head trauma, skin abrasion, and puncture wounds	Necessary path to the forest where there is gross motor development, confidence development, exploration, proprioceptive input, boundary testing, vestibular input, balance, decision making, risk analysis, strength building, flexibility, hand/foot/eye coordination, nature exploration, sensory	0345 Supervising Children 0165 Safety Requirements 0146 Equipment and Surfaces in Outdoor Program Space	Children are always in between adults in the forest. Staff verbally announces to children that there's a steep hill and that everyone will stay on the path. Staff count kids upon entry to the forest and upon arrival at forest destination, if not more frequently. Staff hold hands of children who are likely to elope while walking near the steep hill.

		development, imagination		
Classroom and pond: horse/donkeys (equines), dogs, frogs, known bugs	Potential injury due to biting or kicking, potential illness due to germ exposure.	Connection with nature, emotional regulation practice, sensory input, non-verbal communication, risk analysis	0345 Supervising Children 0200 Handwashing and Hand Sanitizer 0225 Pets and Animals 0240 Clean and Healthy Environment	Staff will always supervise the children when interacting with the animals. Children will be briefed on appropriate ways to interact with equines: fingers straight and together. Staff will stage conversations about emotional regulation around all animals. Children will never be allowed contact with animals if the animals are showing signs of illness. Everyone will wash their hands after touching an animal.
Everywhere: encountering wildlife	Illness due to germ exposure, injury from bites or scratches, potential larger injuries if large animal is encountered	Connection with nature, risk analysis, decision making, necessary side effect of entering forest	0345 Supervising Children 0200 Handwashing and Hand Sanitizer 0225 Pets and Animals 0470 Emergency Preparedness Plan	Staff will scan licensed areas for nests/burrows/animal homes and children will not be allowed near known wildlife. Staff will make sure children know that wildlife other than known bugs and frogs should not be touched. In the event that a child touches a wild animal, they will wash their hands and change clothes as necessary. If the group encounters a large wild animal, the emergency preparedness plan would be followed: stick together, get big, make noise, evacuate when safe.
Forest: unfenced area	Lost child due to elopement from area	Gross motor development, confidence development, exploration, proprioceptive input, boundary testing, vestibular input, balance, decision making, risk analysis, strength building, flexibility, hand/foot/eye coordination, connection with nature, emotional regulation practice, sensory input, imagination, teamwork	0345 Supervising Children 0165 Safety Requirements 0356 ONB Program Capacity, Ratio, and Group Size 0145 Outdoor Nature-Based Program Space and Active Play 0110 Program Based Staff Policies and Training	A play space in the woods will be surrounded by flags to create a "fence." Children will practice returning to an adult when a whistle is blown. Staff will supervise children in the woods. Staff will pay extra attention to children who have a tendency to elope from the group.
Everywhere: weather	Hypothermia, heat	Perseverance, self	0165 Safety	If unanticipated

that exceeds descriptions according to emergency preparedness plan and requires emergency shelter	exhaustion, frostbite, dehydration	help/self care skills, risk analysis, necessary potential event if spending time outside	Requirements 0470 Emergency Preparedness Plan	emergency weather situations arise, children and staff will shelter in the downstairs of the house until guardians are able to take children home. Staff will monitor children for signs of hypothermia, heat exhaustion, frostbite, and/or dehydration. The group will stay together.
Everywhere: heat, cold, rain, snow, wind, etc.	Hypothermia, heat exhaustion, frostbite, dehydration, discomfort	Perseverance, self help/self care skills, risk analysis, connection to nature, awareness of own needs, communication, social/emotional skills	0165 Safety Requirements 0110 Program Based Staff Policies and Training	In situations of very cold or warm weather that do not require emergency shelter, staff will monitor children for signs of discomfort due to the weather. Staff will encourage children to wear appropriate clothing and gear, to stay moving, to find shade, to drink water, etc. Staff will be aware of weather forecasts to warn families of extreme weather. BFS will have extra clothing and gear onsite should children need it. Staff will stage conversations every day about how we can stay comfortable and safe in heat or cold.
Everywhere: foraged food including but not limited to dandelions, clover, blackberries, huckleberries, apples, and pears	Illness due to allergic reaction, consumption of unknown plant, or interaction with germs	Connection with nature, risk analysis, decision making, exploration, self help skills	0148 Gardens in ONB Program Space 0196 Food Sources 0197 Safe Food Practices	Staff will monitor children as they eat. Staff will teach children about the wild plants they can and cannot eat. Staff will teach children to always ask an adult before eating a foraged food. Staff will emphasize that mushrooms and unknown berries of any kind cannot be eaten. All food that children eat will be appropriately washed before eating. Staff will monitor children after eating foraged food in case of allergic reaction.
Everywhere: encountering poisonous plants such as but not limited to	Illness due to allergic reaction or consumption of unknown plant,	Connection with nature, risk analysis, decision making, exploration, self help	0196 Food Sources 0197 Safe Food Practices	Staff will be trained to recognize potential poisonous plants onsite. Staff will show

mushrooms, poison oak, and nightshade	anaphylaxis	skills, necessary side effect of being outside	0470 Emergency Preparedness Plan	children poisonous plants if they're encountered and teach them to avoid contact. If a child touches a poisonous plant, they would wash hands and change clothes if necessary. If a child eats a poisonous plant, the procedures in the emergency preparedness plan would be followed (call 911 or poison control as appropriate, then call guardians. Administer first aid if necessary)
Forest: toileting	Illness due to interaction with human waste, yeast infections and other illness due to improper hygiene	Connection with nature, risk analysis, decision making, exploration, self help skills, gross motor skills, planning ahead	0165 Safety Requirements 0220 Bathroom Space and Toileting	When the outhouse is not an option, children will use backcountry toileting techniques. Staff will teach children to wipe appropriately even in the forest. Staff will assist children in finding toileting locations away from play spaces and paths. Staff will ask children if they need to use the restroom before leaving the classroom to go to the forest. Solid waste will be buried appropriately. All people will wash hands after using the bathroom, whether in the outhouse or in the backcountry.
Forest, field, pond: handwashing	Illness due to interaction with germs	Connection with nature, risk analysis, decision making, exploration, self help skills, gross motor skills, planning ahead	0165 Safety Requirements 0200 Handwashing and Hand Sanitizer	If anyone needs to clean their hands and a sink is not available, they will use hand sanitizer with the prior approval of a guardian. Staff will keep hand sanitizer in the teacher's backpack that travels with the children.

Campfire Checklist

BFS staff refer to this list any time a campfire is built during program hours:

Materials and Space

- ☐ First Aid Kit nearby (fire suppression blanket, non-adhesive gauze)

- ☐ Bucket of water
- ☐ Fire extinguisher
- ☐ Log circle around fire area (at least three feet away)
- ☐ No tripping hazards

Interactions

- ☐ Prep kids for fire:
 - “We are going to light a fire! It is going to be hot. If you touch a fire, it will burn you. So, we will walk near the fire and make sure only one kid is inside the circle at a time. Once the fire is burning, only grownups can put their hands inside the fire pit.”
- ☐ 1:1 ratio inside 3 foot circle, within arm’s reach
- ☐ Fire less than 2 feet in diameter
- ☐ Adults and kids: All long hair tied back, no loose clothing
- ☐ Prevent kids from inhaling smoke

After

- ☐ Extinguish fire fully with water (until hissing sound stops and all material is touchable)

Laundry

Dirty laundry will be cleaned by BFS staff or parent/guardian volunteers. It will be kept separate from clean laundry, cleaned with laundry soap or detergent, rinsed, and sanitized with bleach or a similar sanitizer registered by the EPA; or by using a "sanitize" setting on a washing machine or dryer that reaches at least 140 degrees Fahrenheit.

Missing Child Protocol

If a child goes missing, the third staff member would immediately call 911 then check near the pond and the hillside in the woods, or near the highway, whichever one is closer first. The third staff member would then call the child’s guardians. The other two staff members would lead the group of children in a search for the missing child, first checking the pond and the hillside in the woods, then walking around the licensed space. Adults would periodically blow whistles to alert the missing child of their location as they travel around the licensed space. The group of children would always stay in ratio with adults (1 adult for every 6 children.) Neighbors would be alerted about the missing child. Staff would stay in contact via phone or walkie talkie during the search. After the missing child is found and upon their return to BFS, staff would actively supervise them at all times to make sure they stay with the group. Throughout BFS programming, staff will stage conversations about the importance of sticking together as a group.

Acknowledgment of Risk and Liability Waiver

I understand that school activities could include play and outdoor activities around the Barefeet Farm School grounds, including near the pond and in the woods wherein there could be mosquitos, bees, nettles, ice, blackberries, deep water, and slippery and jagged surfaces among other dangers and risks. I also understand that outdoor activities may occur in the hot sun, rain, cold wind, or snow. I understand that children can be unpredictable and may injure each other.

In the event of illness, injury, and/or accident, I authorize the instructor or any Barefeet Farm School employee to act on my behalf. They may approve any and all non-emergency or emergency treatment and are authorized to sign any and all medical release or required form(s) on my behalf. In the event of an emergency, I understand that I will be notified of the situation as soon as practicable. I agree to pay any necessary expenses incurred in the medical treatment of my child, including, but not limited to all transportation costs to and from a medical facility, and, if necessary, transportation to my home or medical facility of choice.

I understand that the risks associated with BFS activities could result in injury and/or death to my child. I hereby assume these risks and, knowing them, hereby give my child permission to participate. I understand that Barefeet Farm School is not liable for any injuries or other occurrences due to outdoor school activities or related risks, and/or the actions or omissions of Barefeet Farm School staff.

In consideration of my application and permitting my child to participate in this activity, I hereby:

WAIVE, RELEASE, AND DISCHARGE from any and all liability, including but not limited to, liability arising from the negligence or fault of Barefeet Farm School and its staff, for my child's death, disability, personal injury, property damage, property theft, or actions of any kind which may hereafter occur to them including their traveling to and from this activity;

INDEMNIFY, HOLD HARMLESS, AND PROMISE NOT TO SUE Barefeet Farm LLC or its staff. They shall be released from any and all liabilities or claims made as a result of participation in this activity, whether caused by the negligence of release or otherwise.

This Acknowledgment of Risk and Liability Waiver shall be construed broadly to provide a release and waiver to the maximum extent permissible under applicable law. Barefeet Farm School and its staff, acting officially or otherwise are hereby released from any and all claims, demands, actions, or causes of action on account of any injury to my child that may occur. This release binds my heirs, executors, administrators, and/or assigns.

By signing the BFS enrollment form I certify that I have read this document, fully understand its content, and agree to its terms.

